Roger Williams.

CEREMONIES

AT THE

UNVEILING OF THE MONUMENT

TO

ROGER WILLIAMS,

ERECTED BY THE

CITY OF PROVIDENCE,

WITH THE

ADDRESS BY J. LEWIS DIMAN,

OCTOBER 16, 1877.

PROVIDENCE:
ANGELL, HAMMETT & CO., CITY PRINTERS.
1877.

CITY DOCUMENT, NO. 31.

THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE CITY COUNCIL,

APPROVED OCTOBER 22, 1877.

RESOLVED, That the city council of the city of Providence, hereby tender their thanks to Professor J. Lewis Diman, of Brown University, for the learned, scholarly and eloquent oration delivered October 16, 1877, upon the occasion of the dedication of the monument in commemoration of the life and services of the venerated founder of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, in Roger Williams Park; and the joint committee on parks be requested to wait upon Professor Diman and ask for a copy of said oration for publication, and to cause the same to be printed for the use of the city council.

RESOLVED, That the thanks of the council be also tendered to the Grand Lodge of the State of Rhode Island, for their services in the masonic ceremonies at the dedication of said monument.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PROVIDENCE, October 20, 1877.

DEAR SIR:—

In accordance with a resolution of the city council, I request you to furnish for publication, a copy of the address delivered by you at the dedication of the monument to Roger Williams. I am, sir,

Very respectfully yours,

ARTHUR F. DEXTER,

Chairman Committee on Parks.

Professor J. L. Diman.

PROVIDENCE, October 25, 1877.

SIR:—

In compliance with the request conveyed in your note, it gives me great pleasure to furnish a copy of the address at the recent exercises in Roger Williams Park. I remain, sir,

Very respectfully,

J. L. DIMAN.

Arthur F. Dexter, Esq., Chairman, &c.

CEREMONIES.

The city of Providence, founded by Roger Williams in 1636, had seen more than two centuries of prosperous life, had increased till it numbered more than 100,000 inhabitants, had become the second city in New England in wealth and importance, and yet had secured no large public park, and had erected no statue in memory of its founder. Happily, a portion of the farm given to Mr. Williams by his friend, the sachem Miantunnomi, was still in the possession of one of his descendants, and she, his great-great-great-grand-daughter, Miss Betsy Williams, in whose character an affectionate veneration for the memory of her ancestor had always been a prominent trait, determined to honor his memory and benefit the city founded by him, by bequeathing to it this tract for a public use.

The farm comprises about 100 acres of plain and woodland, and has many natural advantages for a public pleasure ground. It is the place where the family of Roger Williams lived for many years, where the old homestead still stands, and where many of his descendants lie buried in the ancient Williams burial ground.

Miss Williams died November 27, 1871, leaving a will in terms as follows:—

In the name of God, Amen. I, Betsy Williams, of the City and county of Providence, State of Rhode Island, being of sound disposing mind and memory, do publish, pronounce and declare this to be my last Will and Testament, hereby revoking and annulling all former wills by me at any time made,

First.—I direct my executor, hereinafter named, to pay all my just debts and funeral expenses, and to place, to mark my grave, which I desire shall be in the "Williams Burying Ground," upon my farm, head and foot stones corresponding in size and quality with those which have been erected to mark the resting places in the same ground of my parents and sister.

Second.—I give and bequeath to the city of Providence my farm, situate partly in the said city and partly in the town of Cranston, lying southerly of and adjoining the Stonington railroad, and also adjoining the westerly side of the Old Pawtuxet Road, (now called Broad street,) containing about one hundred acres, more or less being the same which is now occupied by my tenant, John Read, Jr., to have and to hold the same to said city, on the following express conditions, viz. : That said Farm shall never be sold, excepting, however, such small portions thereof as it may be desirable to sell or to exchange for the purpose of straightening any dividing line or lines, or of leaving the main body of the Farm in a better shape than it now is; that it never shall be used for any special punative or reformative purpose, or for a hospital for any contagious or infectious disease; that no slaughter house, piggery, bone or fat boiling establishment, or any repulsive trade or occupation shall be allowed thereon; that any public purpose for which the said Farm shall be used shall be named in honor of Roger Williams, as "Roger Williams Park" "Roger Williams Cemetery," &c.; that the said city shall erect a monument to the memory of Roger Williams, in the aforesaid Williams Burying ground, at a cost of not less than five hundred dollars; that the said city shall maintain a good and becoming fence around the said Burying Ground, and keep the grounds within the enclosure in proper order; that all sums for which any portion of said Farm shall be sold, as hereinbefore provided, and all sums which may be received for rents, or in any other way derived from the property hereby devised, shall, after defraying the expense of improvements, constitute a fund to be entitled the "Roger Williams Fund," the interest of which shall be applied towards the support of the poor of the city of Providence,—I hereby reserving the aforesaid Williams Burying Ground from the above devise as a place of sepulture of the descendants of my ancestor, Roger Williams, forever. Nothing, however, above contained, is intended to debar the city from laying out such streets and avenues through and over said Farm as the interest of the property and the public convenience may require.

Third.—I give and bequeath to Mary Alice Rein, wife of Emerich Rein, and Fanny Carpenter Pitman, wife of Henry Pitman, both being daughters of my much esteemed friend, the late Thomas F. Carpenter, one undivided half part of a piece of land, containing in the whole about four acres, lying westerly of and adjoining the new Stonington Railroad, to have and to hold to them, their heirs and assigns forever.

Fourth.—I give and bequeath to Freelove B. Carpenter, widow of Cyril Carpenter, and Elizabeth Tower, wife of Emerson Tower, of Providence, the other undivided one-half part of the aforesaid piece of land, to have and to hold to them, their heirs and assigns forever.

Fifth,—I give and bequeath to my relative and friend, Zuriel Waterman, for the term of his natural life, and to Polly Boon Waterman, his wife, after him, should she survive him, for the term of her natural life, the house in which I now live, with all the land belonging to me which adjoins the same, they to keep the premises in a proper state of repair, and to pay the taxes thereon.

Sixth.—I give and bequeath to my nephew, Charles Williams, of the city and State of New York, son of my deceased brother, Charles Williams, all of my household goods, my clothing, carriage and sleigh.

Seventh.—All the rest and residue of property, real, personal and mixed, of every name and nature and wheresoever the same may be, of which I may die possessed or to which I may be entitled, I give, devise and bequeath, the one undivided half part thereof, to my said nephew, Charles Williams, and the other undivided half part thereof to the heirs of my deceased nephew, Albert Pabodie Williams.

Eighth.—I nominate, constitute and appoint my said nephew, Charles Williams, sole executor of this, my last Will and Testament.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal on this twenty-first day of August, in the year eighteen hundred and sixty eight.

Signed, sealed, published, pronounced and declared by the said Betsy Williams, to be as and for her last Will and Testament, in the presence of us, who, in her presence and in the presence of each other, have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses to the same.

BETSY WILLIAMS, {L. S.}

The word "to" on the last line of the second page having first been expunged, and the word "brother" on the last line of the third page expunged, and the word "nephew" interlined.

JOSEPH J. COOKE,
CHARLES W. PATT,
PHILIP S. PAINE.

CODICIL.

I, Betsy Williams, of the city and county of Providence, State of Rhode Island, do, this ninth day of October, eighteen hundred and sixty-eight, make and publish this Codicil to my last will and testament, in manner following, that is to say, whereas, in my said will I give and bequeath to my relative and friend, Zuriel

Waterman, for the term of his natural life, and to Polly Boon Waterman, his wife after him, should she survive him, for the term of her natural life, the house in which I now live, with all the land belonging to me, which adjoins the same, I do hereby order and declare, and my will is, that, after the death of the aforesaid Zuriel Waterman, one-half part of the said house and adjoining land shall revert directly to and be the property of my nephew, Charles Williams, and the other undivided half part thereof shall revert directly to and be the property of the heirs of my deceased nephew, Albert Pabodie Williams, instead of being the property for life of the aforesaid Polly Boon Waterman. And I hereby order this, my codicil, to be annexed to and make a part of my last will and testament, to all intents and purposes.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal on this ninth day of October, in the year eighteen hundred and sixty-eight.

Signed, sealed, published, pronounced and declared by the said Betsy Williams, to be as and for a codicil to her last will and testament, in the presence of us, who, in the presence of each other, have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses to the same.

BETSY WILLIAMS, {L. S.}

JOSEPH J. COOKE,
CHARLES W. PATT,
PHILIP S. PAINE.

The city council, by resolution of date February 12, 1872, accepted this bequest, and forthwith began to plan the erection of a statue to Roger Williams that should far exceed the modest requirements of the testatrix, and which should be worthy the subject and the place. Various committees were appointed to carry out this design, and many plans were examined, resulting in the acceptance of those presented by Mr. Franklin Simmons, of Rome.

After many unavoidable delays, the monument was dedicated on Tuesday, October 16, 1877. The interest in this event extended far beyond the limits of the city; and from all parts of the state came many people to attend the ceremonies. There was great rejoicing that at last a monument was

to be erected to the founder of the city and state; there was an eager interest to see the memorial itself; and there was a strong desire to demonstrate by a large attendance at the first ceremony occurring within its limits, that the park, though but a few years in existence, and as yet not entirely redeemed from its primitive wildness, had still greatly endeared itself to the public.

From these various causes, the committee having charge of the arrangements found themselves compelled to provide for the accommodation of a very large concourse of spectators. Seats were arranged for more than 6,000 persons, and ample space was provided for carriages and for the further accommodation of the general public.

Prof. J. L. Diman, of Brown University, was invited to deliver the address, and Rev. E. G. Robinson, President of the University, to make the prayer at the dedication.

In accordance with custom, the order of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons was invited to assist in the dedication services. The music arranged for the occasion was sung by a chorus of 1,500 children from the grammar schools, under the direction of the public instructor of music, Mr. B. W. Hood, accompanied by the American Band, Mr. D. W. Reeves, leader.

The weather, though threatening rain, did not prevent the early gathering of many thousands in the streets to witness the formation and march of the masonic procession, and to avail themselves of the numerous facilities for reaching the park. By careful estimate, it is known that more than 20,000 persons visited the grounds that day.

The procession formed on Market square and the adjacent streets, at 10 o'clock, A. M., and marched to the park in the following order:—

Police Skirmishes.

Chief of Police, William H. Ayer.

Platoon of Police.

Grand Marshal, Samuel G. Stiness.

Grand Marshal's Aids, Arthur W. Dennis, Stephen F. Fiske, Henry V. A. Joslin.

FIRST DIVISION.

First Assistant Grand Marshal, Walter B. Vincent and aids.

American Band, D. W. Reeves, leader.

St. John's Commandery Knights Templar, No. 1, Providence, Eminent Commander Sir George H. Burnham.

Pawtucket Band, A. D. Harlow, leader.

Holy Sepulchre Commandery, No. 8, Pawtucket, Eminent Commander, Sir Henry A. Pierce.

Detachment of Calvary Commandery, No. 13, Providence, under command of Senior Warden, Sir Horace K. Blanchard.

Narragansett Commandery, No. 27, Westerly, Eminent Commander, Sir R. F. Latimer.

SECOND DIVISION.

Second Assistant Grand Marshal, Thomas W. Chace and Aids.

National Band, William E. White, leader.

Roger Williams Lodge, No. 32, Centredale, A. W. Harrington, Master.

Rising Sun Lodge, No. 30, Watchemoket; Joseph J. Luther, Master.

Jencks Lodge No. 24, Central Falls; A. W. Arnold, Master.

What Cheer Lodge, No. 21, Providence; George W. Arnold, Master.

Harmony Lodge, No. 9, Pawtuxet; Henry B. Thompson, Master.

Washington Lodge, No. 5, Wickford; David S. Baker, Master.

Mount Vernon Lodge, No. 4, of Providence; Joseph S. G. Cobb, Master.

Grand Lodge of Rhode Island.

Grand Tyler; Grand Stewards with White Rods; Master Masons; A Brother, with a Golden Vessel of Corn; Two Brethren with Silver Vessels of Wine and Oil; Junior Wardens of Lodges; Three Brethren with Working Tools; Senior Wardens of Lodges; Two Brethren with the Tuscan and Composite Orders; Three Brethren with the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian Orders; Past Masters; Two Brethren with Globes, Celestial and Terrestial; A Past Master with Burning Taper; Steward with White Rod; A Past Master with the Great Light; Steward with White Rod; Two Past Masters with a Burning Taper.

Mounted detachment of Calvary Commandery, No. 13, Providence, escorting the officers of the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, the committee of arrangements, and invited guests, in carriages, Acting Senior Warden, Sir Nathaniel Grant, commanding.

At the park the seats, were occupied by the members of the city council, city officials, the masonic fraternity, specially invited guests, the school children and the general public.

The monument is erected on the high bank west of the lake, facing west; and is visible from the lake, and from most parts of the park, while the ancient mansion and old trees give it a local surrounding peculiarly appropriate. It is constructed of Westerly granite of the finest quality and of uniform shade. A flight of steps leads up to a square pedestal of excellent proportions and design, simple and striking in effect. A figure of History, in classic drapery, standing on the upper step, is writing with a stylus upon the front tablet in plain script, the words, "Roger Williams, 1636." To the right of this figure is a group of bronze emblems, comprising a shield with anchor, a scroll, books and a laurel wreath. On the rear tablet is inscribed, "Erected by the City of Providence, A. D. 1877." Crowning the whole is the statue of Roger Williams.

The monument from its base is twenty-seven feet in height, the statue of Roger Williams seven and a half feet, and that of History six and a half feet in height; they were modelled in Rome in the studio of Mr. Simmons, and cast in bronze of a peculiar brilliant color, in Munich; the monument was cut by the Smith Granite Company, and a good conception of its general character and of the more minute details of the principal figure, that of Roger Williams, can be obtained from the photographs in this volume.

At the commencement of the ceremonies, the platform in front of the monument was occupied by the members of the joint standing committee of the city council on parks, Messrs. Arthur F. Dexter, Chairman; William H. Shattuck, Joseph F. Brown, Charles F. Sampson, and William S.

Hayward, to whom had been entrusted the arrangement of the services of dedication, and by the artist, Mr. Simmons.

The opening number on the programme, the overture, "Fest," was rendered by the American Band, and was followed by the chorus, by the school children, "Know ye the land so wondrous fair." Mr. Dexter, then opened the services and introduced the artist, who was to unveil the monument, saying:—

GENTLEMEN OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS OF PROVIDENCE:

You are assembled to-day to witness the unveiling and dedication of the monument erected in honor of the founder of our city. The committee to whom has been assigned the duty of completing the work have requested the artist, whose genius conceived and whose skill has executed this masterpiece of art, to withdraw the veil that now hides it from your view. I introduce to you Mr. Franklin Simmons, the artist, who will unveil this monument to Roger Williams.

UNVEILING THE MONUMENT.

Mr. Simmons was greeted with applause and, bowing his acknowledgment, pulled the cord which drew off the veil, and the monument was disclosed to view amid the hearty plaudits of the assemblage. At this instant the band played a staff, and the children sang the following dedication hymn, written by Mrs. Sarah Helen Whitman, of Providence.

ROGER WILLIAMS.

Aye, let the Muse of History write,
On a white stone his honored name,
Loyal to liberty and light,
First on Rhode Island's roll of fame.

While Church and State would "hold the fort,"
With sword and scourge and penal fires,
His faith a broader haven sought;
The faith that welcomes and aspires.

While credal watchwords rise and fall,
His banner to the winds unfurled,
Proclaimed on Freedom's outer wall,
Peace and Good-will to all the world.

Nor codes shall bind, nor creeds divide,
The souls that seek eternal good,
That follow truth's unchartered guide,
And feed on faith's perennial food.

Apart from controversial strife,
Ready to hail the morning's ray,
To break with all the bread of life,
And open wide the doors of day.

Well may the Muse of History place;
Foremost among the just and free,
His honored name, wherein we trace
The soul of Law and Liberty.

The committee on parks (except the chairman) having left the platform, it was occupied by the M. W. Grand Master of Masons, Charles R. Cutler, and officers of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Rhode Island, with the furniture and insignia used on such occasions.

The chairman thus addressed the Grand Master:—

Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons and Members of the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island:—

In accordance with the invitation of the committee on parks, I request you to now perform your part in the dedication of this monument with such ceremonies as you are accustomed to use.

The Grand Master then directed silence to be proclaimed, which was done by the Grand Marshall, after which the band played a voluntary.

W.·. and Rev. Henry W. Rugg, Grand Chaplain, offered the following

INVOCATION.

Almighty and ever-blessed God, in whom we all live, and move, and have our being, we rejoice in thee, and in the thought of thy perpetual presence and guidance. We believe that thou art continually with the nations and peoples of earth, leading them in an upward way, and so making thy kingdom of righteousness to extend its borders; and thus with strong confidence we come to the services of this occasion, and call upon thy name in thanksgiving and praise. Be thou with us, O God, to bless and to direct, for we realize that without thy aid the workmen always toil in vain. We thank thee for all the associations of this place and occasion; we thank thee for civil and religious liberty, and for all noble souls that have lived and wrought for the establishment of thy truth. We thank thee, O God, for what our institution stands for and represents, and for the prosperity that has marked its course. And now, O Father, we implore thy grace and help that these ceremonies in which we are about to engage may be conducted decently and in order, to thy glory and our common and individual good. Amen.

The Grand Chaplain read the lesson for the day, from Genesis xxviii., 10–18, Joshua iv., 19–24, and Nehemiah iv., 38–39; and Psalms cxxi and cxxxiii were read by the Grand Chaplain and brethren alternately.

The following hymn was then sung by the children accompanied by the band :—

Supreme Grand Master! God of power,
Be with us in this solemn hour!
Smile on our work; our plans approve;
Fill every heart with hope and love.

Let each discordant thought be gone,
And love unite our hearts in one;
May we, in union strong combine
In work and worship so divine.

The Grand Chaplain delivered an eloquent eulogy on Masonry, after which the hymn beginning

"When earth's foundation first was laid,
By the Almighty Artist's hand;"

was sung by the children, with band accompaniment.

Mr. Franklin Simmons, then presented the square, level and plumb to the M. W. Grand Master, who delivered them to his officers to make the usual test of the work, and after receiving their reports, he ascended the steps of the monument, and striking it three times with his gavel, he said: "The craftsmen having faithfully and skillfully performed their duty, we now declare this monument to be well formed, true and trusty, and may it endure to latest generations."

The following hymn was sung by the children, accompanied by the band:—

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting thou art God,
To endless years the same.

Time like an ever rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly, forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home.

During the singing of the hymn, corn, wine and oil were poured upon the monument by the officers of the Grand Lodge, who gave the customary invocations as the emblems were poured, after which the Grand Chaplain ascended the steps of the monument and dedicated it as follows:

"In the name of the Great Jehovah we dedicate this monument to the memory of him who founded this city and state. May the great principles of civil and religious liberty which he first proclaimed be here ever maintained, and may they spread until all nations who dwell on the face of the whole earth shall acknowledge their truth.

May the Grand Architect of the Universe look with favor upon this memorial, and cause it to endure through future ages, Amen."

The Grand Marshal then made the following proclamation, which ended the Masonic ceremonies.

"In the name of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, I now proclaim that the monument here erected by the city of Providence to the memory of him who founded this state, has this day been consecrated in accordance with the usage and custom of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons. This proclamation I make once, twice, thrice, in the South, in the West and in the East."

The Grand Officers having left the platform, it was occupied by the committee on parks, the mayor, the orator and the chaplain of the day. The chairman then formally presented the monument to the city, saying:

MR. MAYOR:—This monument, erected by the city of Providence to perpetuate the memory of Roger Williams, is completed, and has, in customary and solemn form been pro-

nounced perfect. The only remaining duty of the committee on parks, who were directed to finish the work begun by others, is to deliver it to the city. That duty, sir, I now perform, and in asking you to accept on behalf of the city this monument, I but give voice to the thought of all in saying that we congratulate ourselves that, to him who was first in our history, and whose memory most deserves every honor we can pay, the city he founded has erected its first monumental statue; and also, that through the genius of the artist, and the excellent judgment of a previous committee, we shall perpetuate his memory by this monument that now takes its place among the noblest works of art.

We are now upon land once owned by Roger Williams, and bequeathed to the city of Providence by Miss Betsy Williams, his great-great-great-grand-daughter. The love she bore to the city her ancestor founded, and her reverence for his memory prompted this bequest, by which she provided that this tract of land which contains about one hundred acres, might be forever kept for public uses, and be known as Roger Williams Park. She died November 27, 1871. Her bequest was accepted by the city, February 12, 1872. November 19, 1872, a committee was instructed to procure plans and estimates for a monument to Roger Williams, to be erected in this park.

December 17, 1874, the design of this monument, offered by Mr. Franklin Simmons, was accepted from among eighteen designs offered, and the committee were directed to contract with Mr. Simmons for the statues of Roger Williams and History.

April 26, 1877, the committee on parks were directed to contract for the granite work, after designs by Mr. Simmons, which contract was awarded to the Smith Granite Company,

and were further instructed to take charge of the ceremonies of dedication of the monument.

The committee venture to hope that they have not failed in perfecting the work begun by their predecessors, and that the ceremonies they have arranged are not unsuited to the dignity and solemnity of this occasion.

And, sir, permit me also to express the hope, that we have to-day done that which shall mark the beginning of a new era in the history of this park, so that from henceforth it shall cease to be a struggling possibility, and shall be accepted as a positive existence, able successfully to assert its claim to the fostering care of the city.

By the memory of him to whom we have erected this monument; in gratitude to her who has given this fair tract of hill and vale and wood; for the sake of the ever-increasing multitude of our citizens, of all classes, who seek harmless enjoyment and healthful rest within these boundaries; by your knowledge that your duty in developing a great city, requires you to provide and maintain a suitable place for public recreation, I pray you, sir, and you gentlemen of the city council, not to go backward nor to creep snail-paced onward in the work of improving and beautifying this park, but rather to give with liberal hand the support that your judgment determines is required to make it, in due process of time, a blessing to our people and an ornament to our city.

And you, my fellow-citizens, let me urge you to encourage by your frequent presence here, and by your words and acts elsewhere, those who shall try to secure for you and for the generations to come, the benefits of a well ordered public park.

Sir, by direction of the joint standing committee on parks of the city council, I now deliver this monument of Roger Williams to the city.

His Honor, Thomas A. Doyle, mayor, accepted the monument in behalf of the city as follows:—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:—

As the representative of the people of Providence, I accept this monument, as a memorial erected by them to the memory of him who founded this city.

You have completed the work begun by your predecessors, and you have the satisfaction of seeing that work approved by the thousands of your fellow-citizens here assembled.

It is a memorial worthy of him in whose honor it has been erected, and most creditable to the city by whose authority it was constructed.

I deem it a great honor that the work has been done during my official term, and that from this day the enduring granite and bronze, so elegantly united by the genius of Franklin Simmons, will make known the high regard in which the people of Providence hold the name and memory of Roger Williams.

I agree with you that this tract of land is a most proper location for this monument, as it was owned by Roger Williams, and never passed from the control of his descendants until it came into the possession of the city. By the action of the city council, it has been dedicated as a public park, and thus preserved against encroachments or improper uses during the existence of the city. It is also a proper location, because almost under the shadow of this memorial lie the remains of her, by whose thoughtful generosity this land was given to the city.

FELLOW CITIZENS:—I join with the committee in the hope that this park will now receive the care which it deserves.

Let it be properly laid out and enlarged by the addition of adjoining territory, connect it by suitable avenues with the land on Narragansett Bay, now owned by the city, and thus secure for those who shall come after us, a park which shall be as worthy as is this monument to bear the honored name of Roger Williams.

GENTLEMEN OF THE CITY COUNCIL:—I have performed the duty devolving upon me by my official position, and have accepted this monument as a finished work. It is not my province to speak of the life and character of him whose name is this day honored, nor to dwell upon the lessons which this memorial teaches to us as members of the municipal government. All this belongs to him whom the committee has most appropriately selected as the orator of the occasion.

I congratulate you, and I congratulate the city upon the success which the artist has so grandly achieved.

The choral, "A Mighty Fortress is our God," was sung by the school children.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION.

Rev. E. G. Robinson, made the following prayer of dedication:—

LET US PRAY:—O, thou who art the God of the spirits of all flesh, whose kingdom ruleth over all in heaven and on earth, God and Father of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, Thou wast the God of our fathers, and thou gavest them the goodly land in which we, their descendants, now dwell. We thank thee for the institutions, civil and religious, which our fathers, endowed with heavenly wisdom, were enabled to establish, and which, in thy good providence, thou hast preserved to us. We bless thy holy name for our heritage of great memories, of high examples of self-denial and virtue, and of unswerving devotion to righteousness and truth.

We thank thee for the life and teachings of thy servant, to whose memory we now dedicate this monument. Thou gavest him to the generation in which he lived; to the country to which in his earlier manhood he came; and to the city and state which he founded. As he commemorated thy manifold mercies to him, by naming, with an imperishable name, the city and state in which we dwell, so would we commemorate thy greater goodness to him and to mankind in exalting him to be a seer and teacher of imperishable truths.

We bless thy holy name, O thou eternal God, that thou taughtest him to teach thy people reverence for the sacred rights of conscience; that thou madest him to discern and enunciate true principles of religious liberty; that these principles, which seemed so strangely erroneous to those who first heard them, are now the familiar first truths of all good government; that these principles, going forth in their simplicity and majesty, have to-day become part of the organic laws of every state in our broad land. Grant, most merciful Father, that they may most speedily encircle our globe.

And now, most gracious God, we leave this monument with its statue beneath the canopy of the same heavens that thy servant whom they commemorate, so often looked on and loved so well. May they endure till the latest generation shall have walked these fields and rested under these skies. Let the lessons which they proclaim be distinctly heard by all who shall tread these walks. May this statue, as it shall stand here by day and by night, in storm and in sunshine, speak of devotion to truth and of fidelity to conviction. Make it, we pray thee, a beacon to warn against the approach of the spirit of despotism, civil or religious, and a reminder of the sure rewards of a life of devotion to

truth and right; and may all who shall look on it catch the inspiration of a charity as broad as our race, a love to mankind as pure and unfailing as that which animated him of whom it is a memorial.

Let thy rich blessings, our heavenly Father, rest on the city and state in which we dwell. Preserve them we beseech thee, from unrighteous and injurious laws. Give to us wise and just legislators; and rulers who in the execution of laws shall fear God rather than man. Help us to preserve our rich legacy of freedom, and to transmit it unimpaired to those who shall come after us. Bless, most merciful God, our city, our state, and our common country, with peace and plenty, and with the righteousness that is through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The children then chanted "The Lord's Prayer."

J. L. Diman, D. D., then delivered the dedicatory address.

ADDRESS BY J. LEWIS DIMAN.

ADDRESS.

We bring to a close, in these services, a long purposed work. A full year before yonder shores were lighted by the flames of the burning Gaspee, when this state was still a dependency of the British crown, and the rule of George the third was as undisputed by the Pawtuxet as the Thames, the freemen of Providence, assembled in public meeting, resolved to erect a monument to the "founder of the town and colony." The population at that date scarcely exceeded four thousand souls, and it is unlikely that anything more was contemplated than a simple memorial to mark the western slope where, for well nigh a century, the rays of the setting sun had gently touched his grave. The swift march of events, the quarrel with the mother-country, the pressure of the revolutionary struggle, hindered a project which still never wholly passed from mind till after the lapse of another century the munificent bequest of one of his lineal descendents made any longer delay unworthy of a prosperous and public-spirited community. Yet we need not deplore a postponement which has caused the original plan to be carried out on a scale so far beyond what was first intended. Let us rather congratulate ourselves that the final execution has been reserved for a time when the real merit of Roger Williams is much better appreciated, and for a generation whose ampler means allow a more adequate tribute, and for

an artist, who charged with the difficult task of embodying in ideal form one of whom no authentic likeness has been preserved, has divined with such admirable insight those characteristics of the man which establish his chief claim to our veneration. And if to any who now hear me, it may seem that some more central or conspicuous site befits so elaborate a work, let it be borne in mind that this statue of Roger Williams stands in the midst of fields which he received as a free gift from the great sachems Canonicus and Miantunnomi in grateful recognition of the many kind services he had continually done them, which for more than two centuries remained in the uninterrupted possession of his posterity, and which have only passed from their hands to be forever preserved for the public use. What more fitting site could have been selected than a spot which thus recalls the estimate in which he was held by the original possessors of the soil?

These ceremonies would be incomplete without a brief summary of the career and services of him to whom we pay this unusual tribute. In thus setting up, with solemn religious rite, a memorial whose enduring bronze and granite shall attest to coming generations our estimate of Roger Williams, we owe to ourselves, we owe to those who shall gaze upon it with respectful interest after we are gone, a deliberate statement of the grounds on which that estimate is based. And on the present occasion such a survey is something more than a becoming close to these public exercises. For as we consider the thoughtful features that have just been unveiled, we cannot forget that they are the lineaments of one respecting whom the judgments of men have been much divided, of one whose career has given rise to more difference of opinion than has existed respecting any

prominent actor in our early New England history. There is, therefore, the more need to-day, that we place on record, even at the risk of reciting a familiar story, the considerations that have moved us to this step. A work which three generations have waited to see finished ought surely to be the fruit of intelligent conviction. Let us then seek to set before us precisely what manner of man Roger Williams was, and precisely what work it was that he accomplished. After he has lain in the grave for well-nigh two hundred years the time has surely come for an unprejudiced estimate of the real service which he rendered, as well to this community as to the world. A proper local pride may make us jealous of the good name of one whose career gives the distinctive significance to our early history, yet if he has really done anything worthy to be remembered, he does not stand in need of mere eulogium from us. The best service we can pay his memory is to place him in his true light; to assign him his rightful rank among the venerated names of the past; to make him if possible stand forth on the page of history in all the essential outlines of his chararcter as clear and distinct as, by the hand of genius, his visible form is made to stand before us now.

And should the natural inquiry here arise, why has the merit of Roger Williams been so much more debated than that of his contemporaries, some of the foremost of whom have left on record such a generous estimate of his character and motives, the simple answer is, that those who have judged him most favorably, and those who have passed the most adverse sentence on him, have equally agreed in assigning the most conspicuous place to what was only a passing episode in his career. It was his fate, soon, almost as he landed on these shores, to be placed in antagonism with a

singularly compact and homogeneous community, a community whose early eminence in letters afforded it a marked advantage in impressing upon posterity its own view of any transaction in which it bore a part. It almost of necessity followed, that when the earliest attempts were made to vindicate his memory, the line of attack became the line of defence, and thus a wholly disproportioned space was assigned to his controversy with the Massachusetts colony. Unfortunately, those who for a long time felt most interest in this controversy failed to estimate correctly its true aspects. On the one hand it was hastily assumed that the course pursued by the puritans could be successfully defended only by representing Roger Williams in the most odious light, while on the other hand it was supposed with as little reason that his reputation could be vindicated best by denouncing in most unmeasured terms the inconsistency which fled from persecution in the old world only, in turn, to persecute for mere opinions' sake in the new. Hence Roger Williams came to be held up either as a headstrong enthusiast, a disturber of the public peace; or as a martyr for conscience sake, who suffered exile solely for his unflinching advocacy of the great principle of religious liberty. But this episode had no such supreme significance as has been assigned to it. Had his career closed with this, we should not be here to-day, for it is not on any, which attitude he assumed at this time that his claim to be remembered rests. It is only in the light thrown back upon it by subsequent events, that the controversy demands even a passing notice on this occasion. When in the month of February, 1631, Roger Williams landed at Boston, from the ship Lyon, he was still a young man. While very little is known respecting him, his whole later history leaves no doubt that when young he

was ardent, impulsive, fearless, fond of disputation, perfectly frank in the expression of his opinions. From the language with which Winthrop notes his arrival as a "godly minister," he would seem to have received orders in the English church; but he had renounced gains and preferments rather than act with a doubting conscience in conforming to a national establishment. Though he came on the flood-tide of the great puritan migration, he did not come as a part of it. It does not appear that he was specially concerned in the memorable enterprise which had just been undertaken by Winthrop and his associates; for he never became a freeman of the colony where he made his residence. In the series of shrewd, well considered steps by which a private trading corporation was silently converted into a body politic, he seems to have felt no interest; nor was the ultimate success of the experiment a matter which he ever had at heart. It may be doubted whether his mind even took in its full dimensions. A man of speculation rather than action, an enthusiast in the pursuit of ideal truth, he came a pilgrim to these shores, in search, not of a thrifty and well organized plantation "with a religious idea behind it," but of a promised land, where truth and peace might have their "endless date of pure and sweetest joys." In his own touching words he had "tasted the bitterness of death," that he might "keep his soul undefiled." It was a foregone conclusion that such a man should come in conflict with the community which received him, at first, with cordial welcome; a community without a parallel in the history of colonial enterprise, welded together by a common faith, inflexibly resolved on the accomplishment of definite ends, earnest to establish a reign of righteousness; but intolerant of difference of opinion, regarding liberty of conscience with

equal fear and hate, and above all, a community where civil and religious institutions were so singularly blended that the advancement of pure religion was viewed as one of the primary functions of the civil magistrate. Against this community, so jealous of their rights, so resolved on the exclusive enjoyment of them, "knit together as one man, always having before their eyes their commission as members of the same body," the headstrong enthusiast dashed himself. He had hardly landed, when we find him denouncing the Boston congregation for not separating wholly from the church of England. He next raised a question respecting the power of the civil magistrate, which cut at the roots of the theocratic system already so firmly planted; he opposed the freeman's oath; and he did all this, not in a period of profound calm, when the freest discussion of fundamental principles might be safely tolerated, but at an anxious crisis when the very existence of the company was at stake; when it was known that in the privy council grave charges were insinuated that the colonists had virtually cast off their allegiance, and were planning to be wholly separated from the church and laws of England; when an order in council had actually been obtained for the production of the charter; when the influx of new comers threatened to weaken essentially, if not destroy, that unity of belief and action which the founders of the colony had regarded as a fundamental condition of their enterprise.

Under these circumstances, the course pursued towards Roger Williams was not exceptional. What was done to him had been done in repeated instances before. Within the first year of its settlement the colony had passed sentence of exclusion from its territory upon no less than fourteen persons. It was the ordinary method by which a corporate

body would deal with those whose presence no longer seemed desirable. Conceiving themselves to be, by patent the exclusive possessors of the soil, soil which they had purchased for the accomplishment of their personal and private ends, the colonists never doubted their competency to fix the terms on which others should be allowed to share in their undertaking. So far from being exceptionally harsh, their treatment of Roger Williams was marked by unusual lenity. His "sorrowful winter flight," when for fourteen weeks he was so severely tossed, "not knowing what bread or bed did mean," was no part of the official sentence pronounced against him, but hardship which he voluntarily assumed.

While there is some discrepancy in the contemporary, accounts of this transaction, there is entire agreement on one point, that the assertion by Roger Williams of the doctrine of "soul-liberty" was not the head and front of his offending. Whatever was meant by the vague charge in the final sentence that he had "broached and divulged new and dangerous opinions, against the authority of magistrates," it did not mean that he had made emphatic the broad doctrine of the entire separation of church and state. We have his own testimony on this point. In several allusions to the subject in his later writings, and it can hardly be supposed that in a matter which he felt so sorely his memory would have betrayed him, he never assigns to his opinion respecting the power of the civil magistrate more than a secondary place. He repeatedly affirms that the chief causes of his banishment were his extreme views regarding separation, and his denouncing of the patent. Had he been himself conscious of having incurred the hostility of the Massachusetts colony for asserting the great principle with which he was afterwards

identified, he would surely have laid stress upon it. It is true that almost from the day he landed some form of this principle seemed floating before his mind. One of the very earliest charges brought against him was, having broached the novel opinion that the magistrate might not punish the breach of the sabbath, nor any other offence against the first table; and in the final proceedings this same offence was made the ground of the foremost accusation brought against him. It is clear that the conviction had a strong hold upon his own mind, and it is not unlikely that "in the spacious circuits of his musing" he already saw the fundamental place it held; but it is equally clear that in the long controversy it had become covered up by other issues, and that his opponents, at least, did not regard it as his most dangerous heresy, So far as it was a mere speculative opinion it was not new. It had been explicitly affirmed in the confession of the English Baptists at Amsterdam, put forth in the year 1611, and according to Cotton there were many known to hold this opinion in Massachusetts, who were tolerated "not only to live in the commonwealth, but also in the fellowship of the churches."

I repeat, that the reputation of Roger Williams has suffered because such undue importance has been assigned to the transaction which I have just narrated. When carefully examined it will be seen that no such significance belongs to it. To upbraid the puritans as unrelenting persecutors, or extol Roger Williams as a martyr to the cause of religious liberty, is equally wide of the real fact. On the one hand, the controversy had its origin in the passionate and precipitate zeal of a young man whose relish for disputation made him never unwilling to encounter opposition, and on the other, in the exigencies of a unique community, where

the instincts of a private corporation had not yet expanded into the more liberal policy of a body politic. If we cannot impute to the colony any large statesmanship, so neither can we wholly acquit Roger Williams of the charge of mixing great principles with some whimsical conceits. The years which he passed in Massachusetts were years of discipline and growth, when he doubtless already cherished in his active brain the germs of the principles which he afterwards developed; but the fruit was destined to be ripened under another sky. Though he himself, at a later period complained bitterly of the treatment which he had received, yet it cannot be doubted that for him exile from Massachusetts was an incalculable boon. As rightly put by his great antagonist, John Cotton, though in a far deeper and truer sense than was intended, "it was not banishment but enlargement,"—it determined him to another, a wider, a far more beneficent career. Had he remained in Massachusetts, he would only be remembered as a godly but contentious puritan divine. Removed for a time from the heated atmosphere of controversy, he first saw in its true proportions the great principle which has shed enduring lustre on his name. His personal characteristics also present themselves in a far more engaging light when winning the confidence of the shy Narragansett sachems, than in wrangling with his brethren of the bay. It would almost seem as if Winthrop himself had some presentiment of this larger future that lay before the exile, when, with the kindness that never failed, he urged Williams to steer his course to these shores, "for many high, heavenly and public ends." I pass gladly to consider him as he emerges on this new stage, where his admirable qualities, his benevolence, his intellectual breadth, his rare spiritual insight were revealed in their clearest light. The solemn bar before which

the actors in the world's history are made to pass for judgment is not a petty police-court, turning its microscopic eye simply on their shortcomings, but a tribunal which weighs the good against the evil that men have done, and which fulfils its high and sacred functions not less in applauding the one than in condemning the other. Few indeed would remain to claim our reverence if we were only curious about their faults.

It was in the spring of 1636 that Roger Williams, accepting the hint privately conveyed from Winthrop as a "voice from God," began to build and plant on the eastern bank of the Seekonk, a little distance above the present Central bridge. But upon receiving from the authorities of Plymouth a friendly intimation that he had settled within their bounds, he cheerfully, though with great inconvenience to himself, set out in quest of another habitation. Early in the month of June, when external nature in this region is decked in her loveliest attire, he launched on this brief but memorable voyage. Five companions were with him in his canoe. The pleasing tradition has always been preserved that, as he approached the opposite bank, a group of Indians greeted him with a friendly salutation, and that he stepped to return their welcome on the rock which for years has been one of our cherished historic spots; but which I fear, in the march of modern improvement, is destined to become to our children a mythical locality. Once more embarking, and rounding the two promontories which, with their crowded wharves and network of iron rails, have so little to remind us of the winding shore and fair undulations of peaceful woodland that greeted his gaze, he turned to the north, and paddling till he reached the mouth of a small stream which poured its limpid current into a wide cove, there made his final

landing. A spring of delicious water gushing from the foot of the steep hill probably determined the precise locality. In grateful recognition of the guiding hand which he never doubted had led him in all his way, he named the place Providence.

The name has become familiar on our lips and few, as they now pronounce it, ever pause to consider how much it means. It is a word that carries with it a commentary on the career of him who chose it. The early settlers of Massachusetts brought with them tender memories of the homes they had left behind. In the names which they selected for their new settlements they gave evidence of the touching solicitude with which these memories were cherished. But when the founder of Providence pillowed his weary head for the first time by the mouth of the Mooshausic, his thoughts turned not to an earthly home, but to a home above. Thrice an exile and a pilgrim, he now saw in his dreams only the open skies and the protecting angels of an invisible power. Years after, in writing of this incident, he says "I turned my course from Salem unto these parts, wherein I may say Peniel, that is, I have seen the face of God." The dreamy, mystical, unworldly temper of Roger Williams is no where made more evident than in this unique designation which he selected for his infant settlement.

In thus settling upon the shores of the Narragansett nothing was farther from the thoughts of Williams than to become the founder of a new colony. Still less was it his aim, like Blackstone, who was here before him, merely to escape the tyranny of the "lords brethren," and secure for himself, in solitude, the largest individual liberty. His end was nobler and more unselfish than that. The great purpose that led him here was simply to preach the gospel to the Indians; to

quote his own words, "my sole desire was to do the natives good." The impulse surely was as lofty as that which had led the puritans, sixteen years before, to seek in Massachusetts, "a place of co-habitation and consortship," where only those who adopted their precise creed should be welcomed to their narrow domain. Already with this end in view he had made, long before his banishment, a diligent study of the native languages. "God was pleased," he writes, "to give me a painful, patient spirit, to lodge with them in their filthy, smoky holes, even while I lived at Plymouth and Salem, to gain their tongue." His exile seemed to open the door to this endeavor. Yet the same benevolence which had led him to make his own misfortunes a means of good to the Indians, constrained him not to refuse an asylum to such as had suffered like himself. Not to promote any private interest, but "out of pity," he permitted others to come with him. A few had joined him while still at Seekonk; more followed him after he had fixed himself at Providence. The territory belonged to him alone. In obtaining it he acted on the principle which he had so earnestly avowed, that the Indians were the rightful proprietors of the lands they occupied, and that no English patent could convey a complete title to it. But though he was obliged to mortgage his house in Salem to secure the means of making presents to the Narragansett sachems, it was not by money that the land was purchased. "It was not," he affirms, "thousands, nor tens of thousands of money that could have bought an English entrance into this bay, but I was the procurer of the purchase by that language, acquaintance and favor with the natives, and other advantages, which it pleased God to give me." The land was conveyed to him by formal deed from Canonicus and Miantunnomi, and "was

his as much as any man's coat upon his back." Thus circumstances which he had not at first foreseen, caused a modification of his plan. Desiring to make his purchase a "shelter for persons distressed for conscience," and considering the condition of divers of his countrymen, he "communicated his said purchase unto his loving friends." In accordance with this modified purpose, he executed a deed giving an equal share with himself to twelve of his companions, "and such others as the major part shall admit into the same fellowship of vote." Such was the simple beginning of the little settlement long known as the Providence plantations. Had Roger Williams loved power, he might have secured for himself some kind of preëminence. The philanthropic Penn did not disdain such a course. But the founder of Providence chose to admit his associates on terms of perfect equality. In providing a shelter for the poor and the persecuted, "according to their several persuasions," he established a commonwealth in "the unmixed form of a pure democracy."

Still remarkable as were the circumstances under which the infant community struggled into life, these do not furnish its distinctive claim to our attention. It was not for the broad foundation on which it rested all civil power, but for the novel limitation which it imposed on the exercise of that power that it holds a place in history so disproportioned to its importance in every other respect. Opened as an asylum for the distressed in conscience, it seems from the outset to have been tacitly assumed that conscience should never be restrained. Hence Williams, in seeking the advice of Winthrop as to the mode by which the new settlement could best become "compact in a civil way and power," makes no allusion to the principle which he had asserted so re-

cently in Massachusetts. But it would be absurd to argue from this omission that the principle had lost any of its importance in his mind. When the actual covenant was drawn up, which became the basis of public order, in extracting from the inhabitants a pledge of active and passive obedience to all orders, made by the major consent, for the public good, the provision was expressly added that this should be "only in civil things."

Thus, for the first time in history, a form of government was adopted which drew a clear and unmistakable line between the temporal and the spiritual power, and a community came into being which was an anomaly among the the nations. The compact signed by the pilgrims in the cabin of the Mayflower has been praised as the earliest attempt to institute a government on the basis of the general good; surely the covenant subscribed by the settlers of Providence deserves a place beside it, as a first embodiment in an actual experiment of the great principle of unrestricted religious liberty. In either case the settlements were small and the immediate results were unimportant; but the principles were world-wide in their application. The Providence document was, in fact, the more significant, since the political maxim that lay imbedded in the Mayflower compact was implied rather than consciously affirmed, while the principle to which Roger Williams and his associates set their hands, was intentionally and deliberately adopted as the corner-stone of the new structure they were building.

The community which grew into shape at Providence embodied in a "lively experiment" the principle which Roger Williams had so strenuously maintained. Let us now examine his position, and ascertain precisely in what sense this experiment was novel. Had we no other information

than the vague charges brought against him in Massachusetts, or the significant clause attached to the Providence covenant, his exact theory would have remained a matter of conjecture. How clearly it was held, how carefully it was limited, there would have been no way of accurately ascertaining. But fortunately he has left his views on record, and we may know precisely what meed of praise is due him. He has himself supplied us with abundant means of making ourselves familiar with the arguments with which he "maintained the rocky strength" of his impregnable position. When in England, engaged in procuring from the long parliament the earliest patent for Rhode Island, he found time, amid engrossing duties, to publish his famous volume "The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution, for Cause of Conscience." and it is in this volume, printed in the year 1644, that we find the first full expression of his opinions. They are views which he had long been meditating, which it cannot be doubted he was revolving in some form when he first arrived in Massachusetts; but which, it can be as little doubted, meditation and experience had matured. The book throughout is of a piece with his whole previous career. It was rapidly written; as he tells us himself "in change of rooms and corners, yea, sometimes in variety of strange houses, sometimes in fields in the midst of travel." The style is not unfrequently confused, as though the earnest flow of the writer's thoughts left the pen lagging behind; and the course of the argument is not always well held in hand. Still each page is stamped with most intense conviction, and in some passages the language has a passionate warmth of imagery that almost becomes poetic. The personal characteristics of Luther are not more distinctly revealed in his writings than are those of Roger Williams.

But what especially marks the "Bloudy Tenent" is the clear conception of one great principle that runs through it, and the boldness with which every logical deduction from this principle is accepted.

The doctrine laid down in the book is that of the radical and complete separation of the spiritual and temporal provinces. Roger Williams was profoundly sensible of the fundamental importance of religion to the welfare of society, and he affirms in the most emphatic manner the obligation of every human being to love God and to obey his laws. We could not do him a greater wrong, and could not more completely misapprehend his meaning than by confounding his theory with the secular theory which has come to prevail in our time, which not only separates church and state, but insists on regarding religion as of secondary consequence. While he removes religion from the care of the civil magistrate he does not weaken in the slightest its binding obligation. But this obligation binds the soul of man only to his maker; no fellow-man has a right to come between. God has delegated to no one authority over the human soul. Under the old dispensation he prescribed the mode by which he chose to be worshipped, but under the new this was left free, and all human laws prescribing or forbidding rites or doctrines not inconsistent with civil peace, are an invasion of the divine prerogative. Belief cannot be forced; to make the attempt is only to cause hypocrisy. To determine the standard of belief the civil authority must be itself infallible; if permitted to regulate conscience, the magistrate will only make his own views the standard of truth. In these propositions we have the great doctrine of liberty of conscience first asserted in its plenitude.

It is no less important to observe how, in the clear apprehension of Roger Williams, this principle was limited. To

those who were firmly persuaded that religion could only flourish when protected by the state, above all to those who regarded church and state simply as two forms of the same thing, it is not surprising that his views seemed subversive alike of ecclesiastical and civil order. But because he so warmly opposed the order then established in Massachusetts it by no means followed that he was opposed to all order. Here again we most grieviously mistake him if we suppose that he sought to weaken the restraints of law. His temper was hasty but not anarchical. When he affirmed his doctrine that the magistrate ought not to punish the breach of the first table, he was careful to add, "otherwise than in such cases as did disturb the civil peace." In his treatise we find this important qualification not overlooked. He affirms that civil society is necessary to the happiness of men, and that to ensure its protection, a sufficient amount of power must be confided to its rulers. But the object of such a society is simply the promotion of civil interests. Still the civil and the spiritual interests of man are so inseparable that even the civil magistrate has duties with reference to religion. If the religion be one that his own conscience approves as true, he is bound to honor it by personal submission to its claims, and by protecting those who practice it; on the other hand, if the religion be false, he still owes it permission and protection. But should a man's religious opinions lead him to practices which become offensive to the peace and good order of society, the civil magistrate is bound at once to interfere. So long, however, as this line is not passed, not even pagans, Jews, or Turks should be molested by the civil power; or, to quote his own words, "true civility and christianity may both flourish in a state or kingdom, notwithstanding the permission of divers and contrary consciences, either of Jews or Gentiles."

To understand how far Roger Williams was the advocate of a new principle we must carefully bear in mind that he was not arguing simply for religious toleration. It is strange how this point has been misconceived even by writers who have devoted careful study to the subject. It is true, that in his letter to the town of Providence, so often quoted as the most felicitous expression of his views, he seems to have in mind merely the right of persons of divers beliefs to be excused from attendance upon the established worship; but evidently his illustration of a ship's company "not forced to come to the ship's prayers" is only a partial expression of his theory. There can be no doubt whatever as to his true principle. The doctrine which he constantly maintains is, not that men of various beliefs should be tolerated by the civil power, but the far broader and more fruitful principle that the civil power has nothing whatever to do with religious belief, save when it leads to some actual violation of social order. In a word, what he advocated was not religious toleration, but the entire separation of the temporal and spiritual provinces.

Mere religious toleration had long found advocates. In the wonderful book which breathes the earliest and purest spirit of the English reformation, the Utopia of Sir Thomas Moore, it is distinctly taught. It was pathetically urged by the great chancellor de l'Hopital on the brink of the precipice down which religious fanaticism was precipitating France; with what practical effect in either case, was shown by the fires of Smithfield and the massacre of St. Bartholomew. At the very time when Roger Williams was writing, it had, in various forms, found much support in England. With the meeting of the long parliament it came to the forefront of discussion. In opposition to the presbyterian theory of an asbolute conformity of the whole nation to one

established church, a theory carried out in the adoption by parliament of the Westminster confession and discipline, there were those who advocated a limited toleration around a national establishment, and those who advocated an establishment with an unlimited toleration of every religious opinion. Roger Williams belonged to neither of these parties. What he claimed was the entire separation of religion from the civil power. His position may be put in a still clearer light by contrasting what was done at Providence with what was done at nearly the same time in Maryland. By the original charter of Maryland, granted in 1632, christianity as professed by the church of England was protected but beyond this, equality of religious rights was left untouched. The mild forbearance of Calvert caused religious freedom to be established; but in awarding praise for this to a catholic proprietary, it must be remembered that Maryland, was not an independant catholic state, but simply the colony of a protestant kingdom. And, at best, it was toleration that was established. Religious freedom was a boon which the civil authority had granted, and which the same authority was competent to limit or take away. So when, in 1649, three years after the settlement of Providence, the legislature of Maryland placed on her statute book an act for securing religious freedom, it was expressly extended only to those who professed the christian religion; while any who blasphemed God, or denied the trinity, were punished with death. Surely no one can confound this with the doctrine laid down by Roger Williams.

That Roger Williams completely solved the difficult problem of the relation of church and state I do not affirm. That problem is more complex than he supposed, and since his day it has assumed aspects which he did not consider. But he

stated it more clearly than it had been stated by any earlier writer, and more than anticipated Jeremy Taylor. He cleared the path which even Massachusetts has been content to tread. The principle which he laid down is now the accepted and fundamental maxim of American politics. More than this, his distinctive merit lays in the fact that he not only defended it as an abstract principle, but himself carried it into successful operation. In the ranks of sovereign honor Lord Bacon assigns the first to the founders of states and commonwealths. In the strictest sense it cannot, perhaps, be claimed for Roger Williams that he was even the founder of a colony, for it was a procedure for which he possessed no legal authority, and which formed no part of his original plan. But since the settlement at Providence, was the creation of his benevolence, and crystallized round his great idea and at last owed its legal recognition to his disinterested labors, it may look back reverently to him as the author of its existence. The unusual circumstances under which it came into being only intensifies the gratitude with which we hail the apostle of religious liberty as the founder of Rhode Island.

But it is time to consider more closely the man himself. For this study the material is ample. No man who ever lived in New England has had every defect of temper so minutely explored and every inconsistency of conduct so unsparingly exposed. The day, I trust, is long past when one in the position in which I stand to-day, is expected to vindicate an historical character from every charge. Of that sort of commemorative discourse we have had, in New England, more than enough. We have ceased to think that in the days of the fathers only angels were walking the earth. Let us then grant, without hesitation, that Roger Williams

was a man like other men. Let us concede that his "many precious parts" were coupled in the early part of his career with an "unsettled judgment," that his "well approved teaching" was mixed with what seemed to his hearers "strange opinions," that the "judicious sort of Christians" found him "unquiet and unlamblike," and that even his best friends deemed him guilty of "presumption" and condemned his conduct as "passionate and precipitate;" yet evidently all these are faults of a generous, a bold, an enthusiastic spirit. There was no quality about him that made him either hated or despised. On the contrary, there was in all his trials a calm courage, an abiding patience, a noble disinterestedness, an unfailing sweetness of temper, an unquestioned piety that won for him the warmest affection even of those who opposed him. We find Winthrop writing to him in words that do equal honor to both: "Sir, we have often tried your patience, but could never conquer it." And the most accomplished of our living critics, Lowell, rises from the study of this period with the remark: "Let me premise that there are two men above all others, for whom our respect is heightened by their letters—the elder John Winthrop and Roger Williams." The very weaknesses and eccentricities of Roger Williams only make him a more striking character. He stands out from the somewhat monotonous background of puritan decorum as the mountains of his native Wales stand out from the uniform sweep of the English coast. The recent biographer of Milton terms him "a picturesque figure forever in early American history," and adds that no man of that age deserves more attention. Must he not have had about him something more than usually winning, who, while still a youth, so gained the regard of that morose and ill-tempered man

Sir Edward Coke, that this greatest master of English law that had yet appeared, took care to further his education, and affectionately addressed him as his son? It is interesting to know that the founder of Rhode Island, who in his writings laid down the principle "that the sovereign power of all civil authority is founded in the consent of the people," thus sat in his youth, at the feet of the illustrious judge who was sent to the tower for resisting the encroachments of arbitrary power.

Roger Williams not only merits our admiration for his personal qualities, his intellectual culture was also generous and broad. By the favor of Coke, he was sent to the Charter-house, then recently founded by a liberal-minded London merchant, Thomas Sutton, but since become one of the most famous of the great schools of England. The chapel stands to-day, with the superb monument of the founder, precisely as it stood when Roger Williams knelt beside it, reciting the impressive liturgy of the English church. On the long roll in which his name ranks among the earliest, are written the names of Barrow, of Addison, of Steele, of John Wesley, of Blackstone, and to pass to our own time, of Grote and of Thackeray; and who that has lingered, with dimmed eye, over the chapters which describe the closing hours of Colonel Newcome, can forget how the memories of this place have been embalmed on the most nobly pathetic pages of English romance. After receiving the thorough classical training of the Charter-house, Roger Williams proceeded to Cambridge, where he was matriculated a pensioner of Pembroke college, in 1625, and took his degree as bachelor of arts in 1627. Cambridge was the great puritan university. There most of the leading divines of the New England churches received their education. Thence came John Cotton, Chauncy,

Buckley, John Eliot, Hooker, Norton, Hugh Peters, Shepard, Ward and others of the men whose piety and learning did so much to give New England character its distinctive shape; nor is there any reason to suppose that Roger Williams, while at Cambridge, was a less apt or less diligent scholar than any of these.

How diligently these rare opportunities of culture were used, may be gathered from a glance at those with whom, afterwards, he stood on a footing of most familiar companionship. Through life his most trusted counselor was the wise, the discriminating, the magnanimous Winthrop, who, he declares "tenderly loved him to his last breath." Next we find him winning the warmest regard of young Harry Vane, like himself an enthusiast for ideal truth, misunderstood by the community in which his lot was cast, but a spirit touched to the finest issues, whom even his enemy Clarendon terms "a man of extraordinary parts," and whom Milton praised as a senator unsurpassed in Roman story. When the acquaintance of Williams with Vane began, we are not informed; but it must have been soon after the latter's arrival in this country, since, in speaking of the settlement of Aquidnet, Williams says: "It was not price nor money that could have purchased Rhode Island. It was purchased by the love and favor which that honorable gentleman, Sir Harry Vane, and myself had with the great sachem Miantunnomi." The name of Roger Williams is peculiarly connected with the most brilliant statesman of the commonwealth; for mainly through the friendly intervention of Vane the charter of the Providence plantations was obtained, so, that to Vane more directly than to Williams, Rhode Island owes her actual political existence. At the country-seat of Vane, Williams, when in England, was always a welcome

guest. But in the circle of his chosen friends was one more famous than Vane. During his second visit to England, we find him instructing John Milton in Dutch, who in return read him "many more languages." It is easy to surmise how two such kindred spirits were drawn together. When his "Bloudy Tenent" had appeared, in 1644, it had been ranked with Milton's "Treatise on Divorce," as containing "most damnable doctrines." They had stood side by side in the great battle for freedom of thought, though even Milton in the magnificent bursts of his "Liberty of Unlicensed Printing," did not advocate a liberty of conscience so complete and absolute as that claimed by Roger Williams. He seems to have had in mind rather toleration than perfect freedom. With the great protector, too, the founder of Providence was sometimes admitted to "close discourse." I need not pause to comment on the kind of man he must have been who was permitted even the occasional companionship of Vane, of Milton, and of Cromwell

One of the most grievous charges brought against Roger Williams is based on the apparent vacillation of his opinions. "He had," said Cotton Mather, "a windmill in his head." But these changes were far less significant than is commonly supposed. With regard to the great principle with which his name is connected, he never wavered in the slightest. On some minor points that entered into his controversy with Massachusetts, it is not unlikely that experience modified his views. But with his religious belief there was very little change. He was a sturdy, uncompromising separatist, when he renounced the communion of the church of England, and such he remained to the day of his death. Warmly as he denied the theocratic theory of the churches of the bay, he always cordially approved their "heavenly doctrine." In no

heat of controversy was he ever accused of being a heretic. It is true that, having been for a brief period connected with the Baptists, he renounced their communion and lived for the rest of his days isolated from all visible church fellowship. Yet, when we consider what the religious conditions of the period were, we shall not censure him severely if, like Milton, he shrunk from the Babel of sects that filled the age with their noise; nor, if we call to mind, how swift and how startling were the transitions of that unsettled time, will it surprise us to see, that like Vane, Williams was led to look for the speedy revelation of a new heaven and a new earth. But whatever we may think of his speculative belief, respecting his practical zeal to do good, there can be no dispute. We find him repeatedly interposing his benevolent offices to save from destruction by the Indians the colony which refused him a passage even through its territory; we find him interrupting his arduous labors in London, to aid in providing the suffering poor of that city with fuel; above all, we find him at all times, on the land and on the sea, yearning to promote the spiritual welfare of the Indians. Eliot has won the name of the Indian apostle; but ten years before Eliot preached his first sermon to the Indians, Roger Williams had consecrated himself to this missionary work; not sent out by a powerful and wealthy board and followed with the prayers of thousands, but driven forth an exile, and selling his house even, "that he might do the natives good."

To the seeker whose adventurous thought carried him further than any of his time in the exploration of a novel principle; to the wise master-builder whose faith in this principle did not falter when charged with the responsibility of an experiment which to so many seemed subversive of social order; to the scholar who, trained in the languages of the old world

wrought the first key for unlocking the dialects of the new; to the philanthropist whose abounding charity recognized no distinction of race or tongue, we erect this statue! Why need I say more? The muse of history has already written her imperishable record; the marvelous touch, that endows marble and bronze with life, has set him before us with a reality that words can only feebly counterfeit!

An epoch is marked in the history of a community when it thus pauses to conquer forgetfulness. We rise to higher levels as we recognize the sacredness of the past; as we commerce with the great and good who have gone before us, and whose examples are our most precious possession. And, still more is this the case, when we invoke the aid of art to invigorate these ennobling influences, and, when we consecrate to the departed, memorials whose very presence among us breeds gracious and perpetual benediction. Let us rejoice that in making, to-day, this lavish offering, we have at the same time, enriched ourselves. Here have we placed our statue of Roger Williams, and here let it stand; here in a seclusion allowing the thoughtful study which its various excellence exacts; here amid the fields which he once received from Canonicus; here in solemn companionship with kindred dust! Here let it stand! Here let returning seasons greet it; here let men as they rest from labor, here let children as they turn from play, gaze with reverence at him who chose rather to taste the bitterness of death than to act with a doubting conscience.

NOTE.

ROGER WILLIAMS, according to the most trustworthy tradition, was a native of Wales, and was born near the close of the sixteenth century. In a document dated July 21, 1679, he speaks of himself as "being now near to fourscore years of age." During his youth, he lived for a time in London, where he attracted the notice of Coke. He was elected a scholar of the Charter-house, June 25, 1621; and was matriculated a pensioner of Pembroke College, Cambridge, July 7, 1625. He took the degree of Bachelor of Arts, January, 1627. His signature is still preserved in the subscription book of the University. From this date till he left England there is no record respecting him, but from an incidental statement in the *Bloudy Tenent yet more Bloudy* it has been surmised that he lived in Lincolnshire. He sailed from Bristol, with his wife Mary, in the ship Lyon, December 1, 1630, and after a voyage of sixty-six days, arrived off Nantasket, February 5, 1631. According to his own account he was invited, soon after, to become teacher of the Boston church, in place of Wilson who was about returning to England, but declined the offer because he "durst not officiate to an unseparated people." The statement that he was admitted freeman, arose from the fact that another of the same name was in the colony, whose application was made nearly four months before the Lyon arrived. In April, 1631, he was invited to the church at Salem, but the authorities interfered, and during the summer he went to Plymouth, where he became assistant to Rev. Ralph Smith. While here he composed a "treatise" against the Patent, which was submitted to the examination of the magistrates in December, 1633, and the author was cited to the next session of the Court "to be censured," but on his expressing submission, the matter was dropped. Before the close of 1633, he returned to Salem, assisting the Rev. Mr. Skelton, but "in not any office." In August, 1634, after the death of Skelton, he was called to be teacher of the church. In November, 1634, he was summoned before the Court for having broken his promise "in teaching publicly against the King's patent." but at the March session, proceedings were again suspended, on the ground that his action sprang from "scruple of conscience" rather than "seditious principle." When the Court met again, April 30, a new charge was brought against him of withstanding the Freeman's oath. Early in the summer of 1635, the Salem church proceeded with his ordination, which led to his being cited before

the Court, July 8, on the ground that "being under question for divers dangerous opinions," he had been called in "contempt of authority," to the office of teacher. A petition of the Salem men with reference to certain lands on Marblehead Neck was, on the same ground, refused. Availing himself of ecclesiastical right, Williams caused letters of admonition to be written by the Salem church to its sister churches, complaining of the "heinous sin" committed by the magistrates. When a majority of the Church showed a disposition to recede from its position, he wrote a letter renouncing communion with them. At the September session of the Court, when he had been cited to appear, no action was taken, and the Court adjourned till October 8. At this time, Williams, when asked whether he was prepared to give satisfaction, "justified both these letters, and maintained all his opinions." In consequence, sentence was passed requiring him "to depart out of this jurisdiction within six weeks." According to Winthrop, this was done "the next morning," which would make the date of the sentence October 9th, but the original record has no mention of any adjournment. On this point there has been a singular confusion. Soon after, Williams was seized with severe illness, and the authorities allowed him to remain till Spring, but as he began again to maintain his opinions "to company in his house," it was decided in January, 1636, to send him to England, when he fled to the woods. After wandering for fourteen weeks, in the spring of 1636, he began "to build and plant," at Seekonk, but in June, changed his location, and settled on the spot to which he gave the name of Providence. During the summer, he interfered to prevent the Pequot league. In March, 1639, he was re-baptised by "one Holliman, a poor man, late of Salem," and united with Holliman and ten others, in forming what was afterwards the First Baptist Church; but after three or four months "he broke from the Society." In the summer of 1643, he sailed for England, devoting the leisure of his voyage to the preparation of his *Key into the Language of America*. In March, 1644, he obtained the charter of the "Providence Plantations." In the same year he published, at London, his *Key*, and in the year following the *Bloudy Tenent*. Bound up with the latter was the *Examination* of Cotton's Letter, in which he incidentally presents his own view of the grounds of his banishment. In November, 1651, he sailed for England the second time, and published in the following year, *The Bloudy Tenent yet more Bloudy*, the *Hireling Ministry*, and the *Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health*. Early in the summer of 1654, he returned to Providence. From September, 1654 till May, 1657, he served as President of the Colony, In August, 1672, occurred his debate at Newport with the Quakers, a full account of which he published in 1676. He died some time between January 18, and May 10, 1683. According to custom, he was buried on his own grounds, not far from his house, and the spot where he landed. The grave was distinctly marked at the beginning of the present century.

PROGRAMME

AT THE

DEDICATION OF ROGER WILLIAMS MONUMENT

IN

ROGER WILLIAMS PARK,

PROVIDENCE, R. I.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1877.

OVERTURE,—"Fest." - - - - - - - - - - *Leutner.*
AMERICAN BAND.

CHORUS,—"Know ye the Land so Wondrous Fair."
CHILDREN OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

UNVEILING OF THE MONUMENT,—
BY THE ARTIST, MR. FRANKLIN SIMMONS, OF ROME.

ORIGINAL HYMN,— - - - - - - *By Mrs. Sarah Helen Whitman.*
CHILDREN OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

MASONIC DEDICATION.

DELIVERY OF THE MONUMENT TO THE CITY,—
BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON PARKS, ARTHUR F. DEXTER.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MONUMENT,—
BY THOMAS A. DOYLE, MAYOR.

CHORAL,—"A Mighty Fortress is our God."
CHILDREN OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

PRAYER,—
BY REV. E. G. ROBINSON, PRESIDENT OF BROWN UNIVERSITY.

CHANT,—"The Lord's Prayer."
CHILDREN OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

ORATION,—
BY PROF. J. LEWIS DIMAN, OF BROWN UNIVERSITY.

CHORAL,—"Praise ye the Lord."
CHILDREN OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

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